WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. An information processing apparatus comprising:

communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication; and

memory means for storing information about a device mountable on said apparatus in a memory area which can be accessed by the external device via said communication control means.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising transmission means for transmitting information in the memory area in accordance with a request from the external device via said communication control means.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said communication control means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

4. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the memory area is set in a configuration ROM defined by the IEEE-1394 standard.

5. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein position information unique to an electronic device is written in a node dependent info directory of the configuration ROM.

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6. ~~The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the memory~~ area is specified based upon information held in a Instance Directory of the configuration ROM.

7. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said memory means stores, in the memory area, information indicative of

a device mountable on said information processing apparatus and a device which has already been mounted on said information processing apparatus.

8. An information processing apparatus comprising:

communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication;

acquisition means for accessing a memory area of the external device via said communication control means and acquiring information about a device on which the external device is mountable; and

display control means for performing display based upon the information acquired by said acquisition means.

9. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said communication control means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

10. The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said acquisition means accesses a Instance Directory stored in a configuration ROM defined by the IEEE-1394 standard to acquire information about a device on which the external device is mountable.

11. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said acquisition means acquires information indicative of a device on which the external device is mountable and indicative of whether each device has already been mounted on the external device, and

said display control means displays a device on which

~~the external device is mountable on the basis of the~~ information acquired by said acquisition means, and identifiably displays a device which has already been mounted on the external device.

12. An information processing system comprising:

communication control means for connecting a plurality of information processing apparatuses so as to allow communication;

holding means for holding, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on said apparatus in a memory area which can be accessed by another information processing apparatus via said communication control means;

acquisition means for allowing a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information held in the memory area via said communication control means; and

display control means for controlling display based upon the information acquired by said acquisition means in ~~said~~ second ~~information processing apparatus.~~

13. The system according to claim 12, wherein said communication control means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

14. The system according to claim 13, wherein the memory area is set in a configuration ROM defined by the IEEE-1394 standard.

~~15. The system according to claim 14, wherein the memory~~

area is an area specified based upon information held in a Instance Directory of the configuration ROM.

16. The system according to claim 12, wherein said holding means holds, in the memory area, information indicative of a device mountable on said first information processing apparatus and a device which has already been mounted on said information processing apparatus.

17. The system according to claim 16, wherein said acquisition means acquires information indicative of a device on which said first information processing apparatus is mountable and a device which has already been mounted on said information processing apparatus, and

said display control means displays a device on which an external device is mountable on the basis of the information acquired by said acquisition means, and identifiably displays a device which has already been mounted on the external device.

18. A method of controlling an information processing apparatus having communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, and holding means for holding information about a device mountable on the apparatus in a memory area which can be accessed by the external device via the communication control means comprising:

the transmission step of transmitting the information about a device mountable on the apparatus, that is held in

the memory area, via the communication control means in accordance with a request from the external device via the communication control means.

19. A method of controlling an information processing apparatus having communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication comprising:

the acquisition step of accessing a memory area of the external device via the communication control means and acquiring information about a device on which the external device is mountable; and

the display control step of performing display based upon the information acquired in the acquisition step.

20. A method of controlling an information processing system connected to a plurality of information processing apparatuses by communication control means so as to allow communication comprising:

the holding step of holding, in a first information processing apparatus, information about a device mountable on the apparatus in a memory area which can be accessed by another information processing apparatus via the communication control means;

the acquisition step of allowing a second information processing apparatus to acquire the information in the memory area via the communication control means; and

the display control step of controlling display based upon the information acquired in the acquisition step in the

~~second information processing apparatus.~~

21. A storage medium which stores a control program for controlling an information processing apparatus having communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, and holding means for holding information about a device mountable on the apparatus in a memory area which can be accessed by the external device via the communication control means, the control program comprising a code of:

the transmission step of transmitting the information about a device mountable on the apparatus, that is held in the memory area, via the communication control means in accordance with a request from the external device via the communication control means.

22. A storage medium which stores a control program for controlling an information processing apparatus having communication control means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication, the control program comprising codes of:

the acquisition step of accessing a memory area of the external device via the communication control means and acquiring information about a device on which the external device is mountable; and

the display control step of performing display based ~~upon the information acquired in the acquisition step.~~

23. ~~An information processing apparatus comprising:~~

communication means for connecting an external device so as to allow communication; and

memory means for storing function information indicative of a function of said information processing apparatus in a predetermined memory area which can be accessed by said communication means.

24. The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein said communication means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

25. The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the predetermined memory area is a configuration ROM.

26. The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the predetermined memory area is a node dependent info directory of the configuration ROM.

27. An information processing apparatus comprising:

communication means for connecting a plurality of external apparatuses so as to allow communication;

acquisition means for acquiring function information of each apparatus from a predetermined memory area of each of the plurality of external apparatuses connected to said apparatus via said communication control means; and

display means for displaying connection statuses of the plurality of external apparatuses together with the function information acquired by said acquisition means.

28. The apparatus according to claim 27, further comprising:

detection means for detecting a function, which can be realized by a combination of the plurality of external apparatuses, on the basis of the information acquired by said acquisition means; and

presentation means for presenting the function detected by said detection means to a user.

29. The apparatus according to claim 28, wherein said communication means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

30. The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the predetermined memory area is a configuration ROM.

31. The apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the predetermined memory area is a node dependent info directory of the configuration ROM.

32. An information processing system comprising:

communication means for connecting a plurality of information processing apparatuses so as to allow communication;

acquisition means for acquiring, via said communication means in a first information processing apparatus as at least one of said plurality of information processing apparatuses, function information of each apparatus from a predetermined memory area of an information processing apparatus connected to said first information processing apparatus; and

display means for displaying connection statuses of

the plurality of information processing apparatuses together with the function information acquired by said acquisition means in said first information processing apparatus.

33. The system according to claim 32, wherein said first information processing apparatus further comprises:

detection means for detecting a function, which can be realized by a combination of the plurality of external apparatuses, on the basis of the function information acquired by said acquisition means; and

presentation means for presenting the function detected by said detection means to a user.

34. The system according to claim 32, characterized in that said communication means comprises a communication control bus complying with an IEEE-1394 standard.

35. The system according to claim 34, wherein the predetermined memory area is a configuration ROM.

36. The system according to claim 35, wherein the predetermined memory area is a node dependent info directory of the configuration ROM.

37. A method of controlling an information processing apparatus having communication means for connecting a plurality of external apparatuses so as to allow communication comprising:

the acquisition step of acquiring function information of each apparatus from a predetermined memory area of each of the plurality of external apparatuses connected to the

apparatus via the communication control means; and

the display step of displaying connection statuses of the plurality of external apparatuses together with the function information acquired in the acquisition step.

38. The method according to claim 37, further comprising:

the detection step of detecting a function, which can be realized by a combination of the plurality of external apparatuses, on the basis of the information acquired in the acquisition step; and

the presentation step of presenting the function detected in the detection step to a user.

39. A method of controlling an information processing system connected to a plurality of information processing apparatuses via communication means comprising:

the acquisition step of acquiring, via the communication means in a first information processing apparatus as at least one of the plurality of information processing apparatuses, function information of each apparatus from a predetermined memory area of an information processing apparatus connected to the first information processing apparatus; and

the display step of displaying connection statuses of the plurality of information processing apparatuses together with the function information acquired in the acquisition step in the first information processing apparatus.

40. The method according to claim 39, wherein the first

~~information processing apparatus~~ further comprises:

the detection step of detecting a function, which can be realized a combination of the plurality of external apparatuses, on the basis of the function information acquired in the acquisition step; and

the presentation step of presenting the function detected in the detection step to a user.

41. A storage medium which stores a control program for controlling an information processing apparatus having communication means for connecting a plurality of external apparatuses so as to allow communication, the control program comprising codes of:

the acquisition step of acquiring function information of each apparatus from a predetermined memory area of each of the plurality of external apparatuses connected to the apparatus via the communication control means; and

the display step of displaying connection statuses of the plurality of external apparatuses together with the function information acquired in the acquisition step.